

U.S. Attorney's Report to the District

Earlier this month I concluded three years of service on the Attorney General's Advisory Committee. The AGAC was created in the early 1970s to advise the Attorney General and other U.S. Department of Justice leaders, and to represent the 93 U.S. Attorneys in the development of Department policies and practices. It consists of about 16 U.S. Attorneys appointed by the Attorney General, together with representatives of the national working groups of Civil, Criminal, and Appellate Chiefs. I was appointed to the committee in May of 2010.

The Department of Justice is the world's largest law firm. It includes a variety of litigating components with different missions and priorities. The 93 U.S. Attorneys, who collectively employ nearly 10,000 people nationwide, are responsible for carrying out those missions in their respective districts. In the last fiscal year, the U.S. Attorneys' Offices filed over 63,000 criminal cases nationwide, and collected over \$13 billion in various civil and asset forfeiture actions. Part of the AGAC's role is to help keep this team focused, efficient and effective during a time of fiscal constraints, technological changes, and evolving national security and criminal threats.

Over the last three years, the AGAC worked on initiatives to address the Department's highest priorities in combating terrorism, violent crime, financial fraud, cybercrime, and civil rights violations. We also addressed budgeting and fiscal matters for U.S. Attorneys nationwide; the deployment of new technologies to improve office efficiency; the revision of national standards for appellate practice and criminal discovery; and many other issues. The AGAC also provided input on Department legislative proposals and revisions to Department policies and procedures in a wide variety of areas.

My work with the AGAC required travel to Washington, D.C. about every six weeks for three days of meetings. While these trips required time away from my office, the time was well-spent. In setting national policies, it is critical that decision-makers in Washington be informed by views from other regions, particularly the far west, which is different in many ways from other parts of the country. A presence in the Main Justice building in Washington is also good for this district. Speaking regularly with my colleagues there helped ensure a better appreciation within the Department of the unique challenges in this district and the work being done in this office.

I was uniformly impressed by the dedicated public servants I worked with during my time on the AGAC, both my fellow U.S. Attorneys and the other Department leaders and staff. We did not always agree on every issue, but we always had thoughtful and collegial deliberations. I saw no grandstanding, only genuinely collaborative efforts to address sometimes

thorny issues with a common commitment to the mission of the Department of Justice. Along the way, I made some great friends.

Meeting regularly with the Attorney General was a particular pleasure. As a former U.S. Attorney himself, he understands our perspective, and values our input. He is committed to pursuing justice with integrity. He sets high standards, and encourages us to meet them. It was an honor to participate in his advisory committee, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve.

If you would like to communicate with our office, contact the main number in Sacramento, or submit a suggestion by clicking the button below. Thank you.

United States Attorney

Benjamin B. Wagner